

botched smuggling operations or perished as stowaways, and those are the ones we know about.

Now we hear about “La Bestia,” or “The Beast,” which is the train carrying migrants from southern Mexico to the border of our country. Think about hundreds of people, most of them children and teenagers, clinging to the outside of a moving train while they are preyed upon by smugglers, sexual predators, and every kind of deviant.

The migrants who are fleeing violence and poverty and gang- and drug-lord-infested communities in Central America, like those fleeing African and Asian countries, are willing to literally risk life and limb for the slim chance of a better life on this side.

Europe is responding to the migrant crisis by committing to more rescue operations. The rightwing, anti-immigration parties across Europe see the crisis as validation for their call to build a big wall around “fortress Europe.” There are a few people here in this Congress, in this building, who want to build a wall just like theirs.

Most people in Europe understand that building civil society and stable economies in the Southern Hemisphere is the best way to entice people to stay home. Foreign aid and international economic development are not dirty words in Europe the way they are here.

In the U.S., the policies set in Washington directly relate to the instability of neighboring countries in Central America, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Trade policies initiated here in this country have had devastating consequences in rural areas across our hemisphere, driving people from the land and driving people into drug cultivation. It is our insatiable appetite here in the United States for illegal drugs, funded with our dollar bills and enforced with U.S. guns, that creates and maintains a lot of the instability and chaos that drives people from their homes to America. Yet almost every budget that is considered in this Congress cuts mental health and drug counseling, addiction treatment and prevention, and does little to address our role in fueling instability.

With specific regard to immigration and asylum, in this Congress, we are debating laws to make it harder for children to apply for asylum and laws to make it easier to deport children or to put families into lengthy and expensive detention.

To add insult to injury, the Judiciary Committee just approved a measure to allow those who want to homeschool their children but who are prevented from doing so by their own government to be considered as a special class of oppressed victims to be considered eligible to apply for political asylum in the U.S. For the people from Germany and Sweden who want to homeschool their children, that is the kind of oppression that Congress responds to—people from Central America whose governments are unwilling or unable to protect children from murder and sexual assault, not so much.

The reality is that we need to do more to engage and strengthen our neighbors; we need to do much more to make sure that the actions, trade, and consumption of our people are helping, not hurting; and we need to do much more to make sure that we have secure borders by also remembering to put doors on those borders so that people can come with visas in a controlled way and not risking their lives with smugglers.

First and foremost, we must remember the message that Pope Francis reminded us of when he said of those who drowned in the ocean: “They are men and women like us, our brothers seeking a better life, starving, persecuted, wounded, exploited, victims of war. They were looking for a better life.”

Let us not forget that migrants are human beings.

HONORING FORMER BRAZOS COUNTY JUDGE RANDY SIMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Brazos County Judge Randy Sims, who passed away on April 2 of this year.

Judge Sims served the Brazos Valley community for decades. He served as the Brazos County commissioner of precinct 3 from 1972 to 1976 and again from 1989 to 2001. He also served on the Bryan City Council from 1987 to 1988. Lastly, he served as the Brazos County judge from 2003 to 2010.

Arthur Randolph Sims was born in Houston on July 31, 1939. He graduated from Stephen F. Austin High School. During his high school days, he was quite an athlete, playing both baseball and football. He passed up a chance to play professional baseball to get a college education. Legendary coach Bear Bryant recruited Randy to play football for Texas A&M University. Not only was Randy a top running back for Texas A&M, but he also held a long-standing record in the Southwest Conference for kicking a 52-yard field goal.

Following graduation from A&M, Randy remained in Brazos Valley. In May of 1960, he married Brenda Bryan. They were married for nearly 55 years. Randy and Brenda have one son and one daughter, and they are blessed with nine grandchildren.

In the mid-1960s, Randy opened a restaurant called Randy Sims Barbecue, which operated for 27 years. Randy was a great cook, and his restaurant carried recipes from Brenda's dad and from Brenda's brother, Red Bryan and Sonny Bryan.

Randy was a loving father, and he cherished his family time. He quickly learned how to balance his career in order to spend quality time with his family. Last year, the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce named Randy and Brenda as its Citizens of the Year. This award was bestowed on them for their long and dedicated service to our community.

As an active community leader, Randy Sims served tirelessly on various boards and organizations, including on the State of Texas Regional Review Committee, the Presidential Library Committee, the Bryan-College Station Economic Development Corporation, the Bear Bryant Scholarship Foundation, the Brazos Valley Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Solid Waste Advisory Board, the Brazos Beautiful Initiative, the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History, the Grace Bible Church Deacon Board, and the Brazos County 911 Board.

His service to the Brazos Valley also included serving as a Bryan ISD host volunteer, as vice president of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce, as chair of the Brazos County Health Board District, and as the chair of the Brazos County Juvenile Board.

Mr. Speaker, Randy Sims was a great leader, a dedicated public servant, and an outstanding family man. His selfless devotion to our community will be greatly missed. He will long be remembered as a great public servant to our community and as a loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend to his family and friends.

My wife, Gina, and I offer our deepest sympathy and our heartfelt condolences to Brenda Sims and to her family. We also lift up Randy Sims' family and friends in our prayers.

As I close, Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Americans continue to pray for our country during these difficult times, for the men and women in uniform, who protect it from external threats, and for our first responders, who protect us from threats here at home.

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

After working 18 years as a 911 dispatcher, I know firsthand the challenges our public safety dispatchers face, the stress that they are put under, and the critical importance of their work. This is why, last week, I was proud to introduce a resolution commemorating National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

I remember working the graveyard shift four floors below ground and taking calls from people from all walks of life, often during their most vulnerable moments. 911 dispatchers hear it all. They are the first point of contact for public safety, and no matter the crisis, losing control is simply not an option.

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week also provides us with the opportunity to remind our constituents of the importance of keeping emergency lines open for just that—emergencies. 911 isn't an information line, and local governments have limited resources.